

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 IO-13 LAB-04 SIL-01

NSC-05 SS-15 DHA-02 MCT-01 PC-01 /077 W

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R 051744Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9309

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

PANCANAL

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PN

SUBJECT: LATIN AMERICAN STUDENTS CONFERENCE.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SUMMARY: SOME TWENTY ORGANIZATIONS AND DELEGATIONS REPRESENTING LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDENTS MET IN PANAMA SEPT. 27-30. CONFERENCE SUPPORTED PANAMA'S CANAL CAUSE AND STRONGLY CONDEMNED CONDECA (CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL). FEP (FEDERATION OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS) ROLE AS CO-SPONSOR OF CONFERENCE WAS GIVEN PROMINENT PLAY IN THE PRESS COVERAGE AND IN RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR PANAMA. END SUMMARY.

1. SOME TWENTY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN MET IN PANAMA SEPTEMBER 27-30. THE "LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDENT REUNION FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ANTI-COLONIALIST STRUGGGL" WAS ORGANIZED BY THE PANAMANIAN FEP (FEDERATION OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS), FEUCA (CENTRAL AMERICA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' FEDERATION), OCLAE (LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENTAL STUDENTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FEDERATION), AND THE UIE (INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS UNION).

ACCORDING TO FEP PRESS COMMUNIQUE, OTHER ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED INCLUDED UNESCO, STUDENT DELEGATES FROM THE MPLA (POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA), THE WORLD FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN STUDENTS AND THE FMJD (WORLD FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH). REPRESENTATIVES FROM CUBA, GUATEMALA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, JAMAICA, COSTA RICA, RUMANIA AND PUERTO RICO ALSO ATTENDED.

2. OPENING SESSION AT THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE WAS ADDRESSED BY UNIVERSITY RECTOR ELIGIO SALAS, FEP SECRETARY GENERAL ROBERTO GOMEZ, AND UIE DELEGATE, BENJAMIN LIVEROV. IN HIS REMARKS, SALAS SAID THE "TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN UP THE STRUGGLE FOR TOTAL SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL--A STRUGGLE PREVIOUSLY WAGED SOLELY BY STUDENTS AND OTHER POPULAR GROUPS." HE ACCUSED U.S. "IMPERIALISM" OF A CAMPAIGN IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS TO DEFAME THE GOP. BENJAMIN LIVEROV PRAISED THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE OF THE TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT AND CHARACTERIZED THE PRESENT STATUS OF PUERTO RICO "AS A MASK UTILIZED BY IMPERIALISM" TO DISGUISE ITS COLONIAL STATUS.

3. ROBERTO GOMEZ GAVE "HISTORICAL" REVIEW OF THE EVOLUTION OF COLONIALISM AND PANAMA'S EFFORT TO GAIN WORLDWIDE SUPPORT FOR ITS CAUSE. IN REMARKS NOT CARRIED BY LOCAL PRESS (SEE FBIS PA 291644) GOMEZ CALLED FOR SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS "TO MAKE JANUARY 9, 1977--THE DATE ON WHICH OUR COMMANDER TORRIJOS HAS SAID THE EXCUSES OF THE IMPERIALISTS AND THE PATIENCE OF THE PANAMANIAN WILL BE EXHAUSTED--TO MAKE ON THIS JANUARY 9 A VIGOROUS AND POWERFUL MOVEMENT OF SOLIDARITY THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN WITH THE JUST CAUSE OF OUR PEOPLE."

4. THE CONFERENCE WAS SCHEDULED TO FOCUS ON PANAMA AND PUERTO RICO, BUT APART FROM STATEMENTS MADE IN THE INAUGURAL SESSION, LITTLE WAS REPORTED IN LOCAL MEDIA. PRESS OF OCTOBER 1 (FBIS PA 11910Y) DID CARRY CONFERENCE RESOLUTION WHICH CONDEMNED CONDECA (CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL) AND UPCOMING MANEUVERS TO BE HELD IN NICARAGUA, AND ROLE OF CONDECA IN SUPPRESSION OF "THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE" IN NICARAGUA, GUATEMALA AND EL SALVADOR.

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5. THE CONFERENCE ALSO PASSED THE EXPECTED RESOLUTION (FBIS PA 020419Y) SUPPORTING PANAMA'S CANAL CAUSE. THE RESOLUTION ACCUSED THE U.S. OF MAINTAINING A COLONIAL ENCLAVE IN PANAMA, CONDEMNED MILITARY BASES AND INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS" IN THE CANAL ZONE AS INSTRUMENTS OF AGGRESSION, AND ACCUSED THE U.S. OF WAGING A DESTABILIZATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST PANAMA. RESOLUTION ALSO PRAISED THE ROLE OF THE FEP IN THE PANAMANIAN STRUGGLE.
END UNCLASSIFIED

6. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT: MOST NOTABLE IN PRESS
COVERAGE OF CONFERENCE, WHICH WAS RELATIVELY LIGHT, WAS
EMPHASIS GIVEN TO FEP'S ROLE IN THE FUNCTION. THIS WAS NO
DOUBT AN EFFORT TO HELP FEP REESTABLISH ITS REVOLUTIONARY
CREDENTIALS WHICH WERE TARNISHED BY ITS SUPPORT OF THE GOP IN
THE STUDENT-GOVERNMENT CONFRONTATION OF LAST MONTH.
JORDEN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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